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Thanksgiving
SERMON,
FOR THE
SUCCESS
OF
Her Majesties FORCES.

Preach'd at *Hand-Alley*, November 12, 1702.

By *DANIEL WILLIAMS*,
Minister of the Gospel.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *John Lawrence*, at the Angel in the *Poultry*. 1702.

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FOR THE

SUCCESS



Her Majesty

Witnessed at St. James's Palace, December 11, 1702.

By DANIEL WILLIAMS,

Minister of the Gospel.

LONDON,

Printed for J. Smith, at the Angel in the Fore-street, 1702.

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THE PREFACE.

A Report, that the Success of her Majesties Arms was not pleasing to us Dissenters, is one Reason of publishing this Sermon; where- in all Willers may find us affected with our Victories, as a com- mon Benefit; as well as Directions to improve them.

I was at some Loss whence this Suspicion could arise, after we had so- mnly in the appointed Fast, and usually throughout the Campaign pray- ed for this Success; yea and when we neither do, nor can propose any Inter- separate from that of all true English Protestants.

But by the early Use, some hot Clergy-men make of our Prosperity, I am distressed, that a consciousness of the Wound designed us by them, rais'd a jealousy in themselves, that what rendered the Execution more safe, must be displeasing to the Sufferers. Yet here their narrow Spirits are not the Standard; for I assure them, that we still thank God for this publick benefit, by weakening France; though we are griev'd, that what's so great Blessing in its own Nature, should be abused by them to purposes, no less hurtful to the Enemy, than if the French King were the Adviser.

The Moderate Principles I still espouse, (to the Offence of several) gives the greater Uneasiness, when Moderation is exposed as the worst of times, and more mortal Strokes are still levelled at the dying remains of unity among us; as if the Holy Catholick Church, and the Commu- nion of Saints, were expung'd out of our present Creed.

But why must this Course be supported by the Imputation of Hypocrisy? when none can be Ignorant, that the generality of English Presbyterians us'd Occasional Communion with the Church of England, as their Principle, frequently did so Communicate, before the Sacramental Test was Enacted. I saw they bow'd its Blameable, when Christ and his Apostles worshipp'd in the Jewish Temple and Synagogues, and in their separate Meetings too.

The P R E F A C E.

However, since Divisions are so lightly accounted of during a War, which needs our United Strength, if prosecuted as our own and Europe's Safety requires: And when it's the undoubted Interest of our Glorious Queen, to be the Head of the Protestants: A Zeal for Publick Good must engage all Mens Foresight, to what these tend, and where they'l issue.

A Church standing on its Steeple Spire, is not a Figure of what's most established: yet this is a fit Emblem of any Protestant Party that lays its whole stress upon, and discriminates it self with Severity from all others by that which is not any pretended Article of Faith, and wholly useless to Divine Worship, Discipline, or any other truly Christian Purpose, except a meer Recognition of the Authority of the Imposer; which is no ordinary Reason for any Humane Laws, and much less decent for those made by a Church, which hath no Power, except for Edification. Besides this narrowness of the Bottom, I, and all others, who desire the National Church to be ever a strong Bulwark against Popery, do observe, that among its Members, there will be left a great Number of Persons truly Pious, and Moderate, hating Violence, and Zealous only for the Essentials of Religion in Principle and Practice; and not a few Heterodox, or Profane, or Haters of all Clergy. Now, when none of these can be thought well Cemented by the fore-cited Points, the warm and narrow Party, as such, will be subject to great Temptations, when they find Popish Assaults, not against what they distinguished themselves by, but only against what's common to all other Protestants.

Nor ought it be a despised Indication of Providence, that the two Great Points, by which the high Men of the Clergy were Characteriz'd in former Reigns, have been exposed and disowned by themselves; the Doctrine of Passive Obedience by the Jurors in the Last, yea this present Reign, and that of the Magistrates Power in Religion, by the Non-jurors, and many others.

That God would avert his Judgments, by preventing an increase of Guilt by our Successes, and make us as Happy by them, as the Influence of Publick, Wise, and Moderate Spirit, on all our Affairs, would render is my unfeigned Prayer, as a true Lover of the Protestant Religion, Government, and Nation.

Decemb. 2.

1702.

Daniel Williams

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II CHRON. XX. ver. xxvi, xxvii, xxviii.

and on the Fourth Day, they assembled themselves in the Valley of Berachah, for there they Blessed the Lord, &c. Then they returned every Man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the Fore-front of them, to go again to Jerusalem with Joy: For the Lord had made them to rejoice over their Enemies, and they came to Jerusalem with Psalteries, and Harp, and Trumpets, unto the House of the Lord.

THAT the fitness of this Text to our present Solemnity may be more evident, I shall State the Occasion of this Triumph with short Remarks on each Head.

I. Jehoshaphat after a great Reformation, is assaulted by a numerous Host of idolatrous Enemies, Ver.
2. It came to pass after this also, that the Children of Moab,
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and the Children of Ammon, &c. came against Jehoshaphat Battle, &c. Idolaters are apt to Combine against Reformed Churches; nor ought ensuing Wars to be accounted Divine Rebuke for Reformation.

2. The Sense of this Danger excites Jehoshaphat to Publick Fasting, and fervent Prayers, *ver. 3, to 13*. This is the safest Course in all Extremities: And oh hopeful and happy Judah in a truly Reforming, and Praying Prince!

3. God presently assures them of Conquest, and this by his own more immediate Hand, *ver 14, to 17*. The serious Prayers of a Reformed People in extream Dangers soon meet with signal Answers.

4. The King believeth, and praiseth God, as if the Victory were already obtained, and perswades the People to the highest Confidence in the Prophets Message; *Ver. 18, 21*. Faith in the Promises of God, and Thankfulness for them, are good Pledges of their Accomplishment.

5. God fulfils what he engaged; both in the Ruine of the Enemy, and in the very Manner predicted: That the Multitude is destroy'd by their own Hands. Jehoshaphat's Army was too faint for so great a Slaughter; God therefore employs an Angel, or impresseth the Minds of the Adversaries upon Mistakes, or Jealousies, to become their mutual Executioners. Yea, God doth not only perform the utmost of his Engagement by subduing the Enemy, but exceeds his Word by enriching Judah with their vast and unexpected Treasures; *Ver. 22, to 25*. The Multitude and Strength of united Armies, become but greater Trophies to the despised, when God engageth their Defeat. And the Treasures which were to help the strongest, are easily made enriching Spoils to the weakest Bands, whom God undertakes to lead. I need not add, Gods performances exceed, but never fall short of the utmost good included in his Promises.

6. Jehoshaphat and his People entertain this signal Mercy with a becoming Sense of God's Hand; it struck them

inds, and well it might, when the Appearance of God in
the success of this War, and the Consequences thereof to
their Church and State were so manifestly great, and affe-
cting. The sudden Change made in their Circumstances was
very extream; *viz.* The most entire Victory over an Ene-
my every way fitted and ready to destroy them: The Hand
of God in this Victory was also very extraordinary, of
which they were convinced by his *foretelling* it by his Pro-
phet, upon their Prayers; as well as by the Method of ob-
taining it. This affecting *Sense* is that, which exerts it self
in the Text, as a proper Expression thereof: For which you
read of a *First* and *Second* Time of Thanksgiving. The
first in the Valley of *Berecha*, as soon as the Work was fini-
shed; the other at *Jerusalem* in the House of the Lord. Both
discover'd a grateful Mind towards God, and a Zeal for his
honour; the former by the *Haste*, the latter by the *Solemnity*
of their Acknowledgments. They thought the Publi-
cation of Gods Praise could be neither too soon, too often,
nor too solemn.

To introduce the Doctrine, of which I shall treat, I need
no further Reference to the *Context*, then saying, the War
ended with the forementioned Success, was a *just* War;
it was approved by God to be such, and undertaken by
authorized Persons in Self-Defence, *ver. 11, 15.*

*Doct. Signal Successes given by God in a just War, are
ground of great Joy, as also of the most devout Praises,
Blessings, and Thanksgivings to God.*

This Doctrine is self-evident as to the Truth of it, for
to rejoice, were unnatural; not to be *thankful*, were de-
sh; not to *bless and praise* the Lord, were brutal; and to
this otherwise than *devoutly*, would be hypocritical and
phane. Signal Successes given by God in a just War,
and sufficient Reason for all this; thence cogent Motives
deriv'd. Yea, and being granted as the State of our
Case,

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Case, the Light of Nature and common Ingenuity demand such Acts in return; they being no other than a just Tribute from the *Receivers* to the Blessed *Donor*.

Indeed, were there *no Success*, there would be place for Mourning; if the Success be *inconsiderable*, Joy would be in lower Degrees; if the War be *unjust*, Success would be a Snare: Moreover, if God had no hand in the Success of a just War, he should not be entitled to *Praises* and *Thanksgivings* for that Success: yea, were not the Success *signal*, and his Hand great in the Victory, the Argument for *very high Praises* would not be so evidently strong.

But when all such *abatement*s are excluded, and their *contraries* very manifest, there can be no excuse from any of those acts (no nor from *any Degree* of them) which are by the Doctrine required, as a dutiful Return for the Benefits mentioned therein.

Having hinted at the evident *Truth* of the Doctrine, as far as it *connects* the Benefit received, and the Duties enjoined; I need not enlarge further on it, as a *general Head*; and the rather, because the suitableness of it to our *present Solemnity* is so exact, that whatever *Explication* is necessary shall be attended to either, when I urge the forementioned *Duties*, or when I demonstrate, that our acknowledged Mercies do include all the supposed *Reasons* of such Duties.

I shall therefore Apply and confine the *Doctrine* to our Cause wherein the whole of it is comprehended: there we shall find what will justify a becoming Joy over our Enemies, and awaken us *gratefully* to praise and bless the Lord our God. For this we have eminent Cause; in *this* we cannot exceed, if we regard the *Description*, which I shall give of these several Duties.

It being impossible to pursue the full Scope of this Head in one Discourse, I shall consider it under these two more substantial Parts.

I. The *Grounds upon which sundry Duties are required*. These are summed up in those words; Signal Successes given us by God in a just War against our Enemies. This is the very Me-

we possess; and it is of that Nature, as to support the fitness and Necessity of those solemn Thanksgivings we profess to offer: Thanksgivings appointed by the Government, and wherein our glorious Queen is, with *Jehoshaphat*, in the forefront of her People.

2. *The Duties required upon these Grounds*: These are several, Praise, Blessing, Thanksgiving, and Joy. Each of these, whereof not one may be omitted; for all these are just upon the same common Reason; yea, and somewhat of each ought to be intermingled, which ever of them is most expressly attended to. We should *cheerfully* and *thankfully* praise and bless our Lord; we must rejoice with thankful *Adoration and Praises* to our God; we should offer Thanksgivings with *Joy* and *adoring Praises*: So that if you perform any one of these aright, you must take in all as necessary Ingredients; because to rejoice without Praises and Thanksgivings to God is a *carnal Joy*. To thank and praise the Lord without Joy, is too *sullen*, and must be so far streightned. To thank God without *Blessing* him, would set us on too *rude a level* with God, whom we ought most devoutly to adore. To Bless and Praise God without *ful Thanksgivings* would too much extinguish Praise, and show our want of a due sense of *our own* Interest in the Benefit received.

Therefore we ought to exercise our selves in all these, and every Motion of our Hearts tinged with each, calling our Spirits to excite whichsoever of them seems omitted, and more remiss.

But I shall consider both these Parts more distinctly and fully.

1. *The grounds upon which the several Duties are required*, The signal Successes given us by God in our just War against our Enemy.

These I shall clear, that the Reasons and Motives to the several Duties may be more evident, affecting, and forcible. I shall reduce these, 1. To the justness of the War. 2. To the bounteousness of the Success.

1. In the greatness of it. 2. In the momentous Consequences of it. 3. In the Manifestation of God therein.

1. *The War wherein we are engaged is a just War.* Had we undertaken this War for *ill ends*, such as vain Glory; unjust usurpations of Power, Rapine, enlargement of Territories, or unlawful Revenge. Had it been entered into to defend a bad Cause, or in a treacherous breach of Contracts, or needlessly to disturb our Neighbours, or to overturn the Ballance of *Europe*, or the like: We could not then justly have pray'd for the Almighty's Blessing on our Arms, neither would our Success prove in the Issue a national Mercy.

But it is not thus; no, the injustice lies altogether on our Enemies part, on the *French King's* Ambition, Oppression, Cruelty, Depredations, Treachery, and usurping Designs, these lodge at his Door; and this so evidently, that the World might have been assured God intended no real Blessing for him, even when he was most Victorious; but that he was reserved for greater Vengeance, which he now begins to feel, to the lessening of his *Glory*, that *Idol*, the total Eclipse whereof was presaged by this present Stroke.

Whereas the Cause on our part is the Defence of our just Rights, and those of our Allies against his Attempts; the recovering of what he so injuriously usurped, and the securing of *Europe* from that Slavery and Ruin, which his Preparation and Advantages visibly threatned; yea, so near was the Danger that a short Delay must have subjected the *Empire*, *Holland*, and our selves to his Insults. And when we once had been reduced under his Power, you may judge by his former Invasions and Perfidiousness, whether Justice, Honour, or Charity could restrain his Will. His barbarous Management of Advantage appears in numerous Instances, to all Persons, who remember his Proceedings against *Lorain*, *Netherlands*, *Suabia*, *Treves*, *Palatinate*, *Cologne*, *Mentz*, *Wirtemberg*, *Spire*, &c.

2. But besides our taking the Alarm from his exorbitant Power and vast Preparations, which the Law of Nations admits to be a just Cause for War: we have much more to justify our Undertaking

undertaking. He against the most solemn Oaths of Renunciation, hath taken Possession of *Spain*, to the Injury of the Emperor; yea, this is done against the express Articles covenanted with us in the Treaty of *Partition*. 'Tis true, he offers for Apology, that he could not divest his Children of their Right by his renouncing. But besides the Falshood of this as *national Contracts*, was not he barr'd from employing his Treasure, Arms, and Power against his Oaths.

If this be not enough, he hath set up and proclaimed for King of these our Nations, the pretended Prince of *Wales*, against the establish'd Laws of this Realm, yea and against his solemn Covenants in the Treaty at *Reswick*.

These *Reasons* of the War so demonstrate the *Justice* of it, that this, with the things depending on the War, may give it the title of one of the *Wars of the Lord*, and not unfitly allow to apply our Success thereto, in these words; *And they made war with the Hagarites, and they were helped against them, and the Hagarites were delivered into their Hands, &c. because the war was of God.* 1 Chron. 5. 20, 21.

2. The Success of this just War against our Enemies is *very signal*, its not so common as to be overlook'd among *ordinary* occurrences; there's that impressed upon it which commands observation and Wonder, yea and obligeth to unusual Acknowledgments, which will be granted, if we rightly consider the greatness and the Consequences of this Success, with the evident Tokens of the Hand of God therein.

1. The Success is Signal with Respect to the *greatness* of it. We, with our Allies have prevail'd both at Sea and at Land; not in a few, but many Places; not in a small number of struggles, but in multitudes; not in mean Instances, but in those very considerable; not against a weak unprepared baffled Enemy, but against a powerful prepared Adversary, confident of victory, and accustomed to them: take a small part instead of a full enumeration; in *Flanders*, *Liege*, *Keiserswart*, *Venlo*, *Armond*, are reduced by the united Forces under the Earl of *Marborough*. Upon the *Rhine*, *Landau* considerable as a Pass, and

and for its Strength, is taken. In *Italy* Prince *Eugene* obtains great Advantages at *Luzara*, and other Places. Our Forces under the Duke of *Ormond* at *Vigo*, have gotten a considerable Treasure, and there are burnt and taken seventeen Gallies, fifteen Men of War, with several other Vessels. It would be tedious to include in this Account what Prizes we have taken at Sea, and what we have gained at *New-England*, *Newfoundland*, and the *Leeward Islands*, the one half would suffice to commend our Success as very great.

2. The Success is Signal in its Consequences and probable Effects. They are not small *Mischiefs* which are obstructed, nor less than Slavery, Popery, and barbarous Usages; the good Prospect is not trivial, unless Religion, civil Liberties, our Inheritance, Safety, and Trade, must be so accounted. The Ships and Treasure lost at *Vigo* conduce to break the French Measures; that King reckoned by this *Flota* to bribe Men of Influence in several Courts, Camps, and Navies, and greatly to augment his Forces. Nor is it improbable that he ventur'd on vaster Expence than his stated Fonds did answer, and the prospect of this Money, a Disappointment wherein strikes in the tenderest part!

The Ships and Seamen taken and lost in this War, will not a little check his formidableness at Sea, where for many Years he hath so applied his Care. His Trade, and awful name will be subject to Abatement; and his resolved Obstruction to his Neighbours *Traffick* far less promising.

At *Land*, there's a way almost opened to *France* by *Land*; good Frontiers obtain'd for *Holland*, with Forage and Contribution for the Confederate Forces in *Flanders*; besides Advantage for further Conquests by their Situation: Nor is it a small matter that in *Italy*, there's time for the Relief of Prince *Eugene*, for a more hopeful Campaign.

Nor doth it less affect the whole, that the Alliances have Encouragement to be more fixed against the Attempts to grow Men; yea they are like to be enlarged by *Portugal*, and other States, who were deterr'd by Fear; and an Addition made to

their Force, by such as a most unhappy War in the North
inverted.

Tho' I may have Occasion under another Head to en-
large this Account; yet with any, who have a Love to their
Country, a Regard for Mankind, a Zeal for Religion, and
an Abhorrence of Publick Devastations, with any Sense to
judge of the Tendency of Things; enough is already offered
for their Conviction, that the Success is to be allow'd Signal
in Respect of its Consequences.

3. The Success is Signal by the eminent Appearances of
the Hand of God therein.

Tho' God did not give us Victories so *immediately*, or by
means altogether so *improbable* as in the Case of *Jehoshaphat*,
yet the Fool may see, and the Prophane must acknowledge
a very remarkable Concern of God therein. Can we strictly
observe an exact Account of our Successes, and not be forced
to say, *Surely the Lord our God fought for us*. A calm view
of sundry Circumstances will affectingly inform us, that its
Signal Providence which continued and invigorated the
Confederacy after King *William's* Death, who by his Great-
ness and Integrity, was the very Heart and Center of it; and
when too many influencing Persons shew'd an Aversion to
the War.

Josh. 23.
10.

Did not the Hand of God appear? That in *Bodies* of Mi-
itary Men so *different* in Temper, Interest, and Inclination;
yet so great a *Harmony* was maintain'd among both Officers,
and Private Souldiers.

Who below our Almighty God was able to Support the
Forces of our Allies in *Italy*? When under such Disadvan-
tage for Number, Garrisons, Money, and Supplies: Yet they
did not only *maintain* their Ground, where the *French* King
directed his *chief* Strength; but had oft the better of his Ar-
my, tho' so much Advantag'd to execute his Resolution, to
that Country of the *Germans* this last Year.

Did not our God so Spirit our *Soldiers* at *Venlo*, and the
Besiege of *Liege*? That the Enemy with Wonder exclaim'd,
these

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these Men have *Wings* as well as Hands for their Assaults!

Was it not a Divine Adjustment, which so *hasten'd* the Surrender of *Landam*, beyond the Duke of *Bawaria's* expectation? whereby a Force was set at *Liberty*, to restrain the Depredations, he with the *French* were resolved to commit. When God let us see, how subject we were to baffling Disappointments, in our Attempts on *Cadiz*, even where we seem'd most assured of Success, and best provided: His meer Providence lock'd up our Fleet by contrary unusual *Winds*, which else had arriv'd in *England* under that Reproach. By his Providence the *unexpected* News of the *Flotas* being at *Vigo* was brought to our Fleet, thus imprison'd to wait the Tidings which the Bearer came to the Knowledge of without Design. Our God, the *God of the Spirit of all Flesh*, made the best Advice to sway the Officers to the Attempt. He provided a *Papish Priest*, with two or three other Men, to be near the Shoar who (tho' unwillingly) discover'd to us our Difficulties, Dangers, and best way of assaulting their own Friends. He, the Lord raised a *Mist*, which concealed us from our surprized Enemies, and hurried our Men down an unwonted Precipice to their Amazement, whereby the Volunteers possess'd the Fort, before the appointed Parties arriv'd. Are not each of these a Divine Footstep? And yet without these, this momentous Affair had been either unattempted, or miscarried. But God directed the whole matter so to cover our Reproach abroad, and prevent our Murmurs at Home, as if we had left *Cadiz* only to seize the *Flota*. Who can disregard his Providence, which found a way so seasonably to make full amends for our Disappointment? and contrived for us a greater Benefit by finding them secured at *Vigo*, than if we had beaten them at Sea, where a great number of the Ships had escaped by flight.

These were the *Lord's doings*, and they are marvellous in our Eyes, as they be the traces of his Wisdom, and indications of his Favour to unworthy *England*, under so perplexed an Emergency. Nor dare I overlook in this propitious Event of our

Retreat

retreat from *Cadiz*, a divine Tenderness for King *William's* reputation, who adjusted that Enterprize; which though he design'd in a way *more* favourably circumstantiated for Success, yet could be followed as to several Particulars; yet *ungrateful* people arraigned his Name, as if he had been the Author of the miscarriage in the Execution; but tho' that Clamour be hush'd by this Occurrence; yet in what Amazement must every *true* Protestant *English-man* enquire, what is the Design to be served? by what Principle are they acted? who pretending the same Character, do prostitute the Fame of that *glorious* Prince, as if he had never deliver'd us from Popery and Slavery, or that his making the way to Protestant Successors (both at present and hereafter) in the Throne; or his chusing the *best* of the Clergy to fill the *Sees*, and justest of Lawyers to fill the *Benches*, were Injuries never to be forgiven.

Moreover, the lustre of Providence is not obscured by reversing this heap of humbling Victories over the *French* King, at a time when he thought his long design'd Project could no farther be obstructed: when the Riches, Force, and Territories of *Spain* were in his hand; when King *William*, (his only dreaded Impediment) was removed; when his Preparations in all Respects so assured him of a general Triumph, and an *Universal Monarchy*; that he publickly Affronted every *State*, which he could not *bribe*; insulted all Potentates whom he might not *blind* to be their own Betrayers and Destroyers. *Then*, even then, God proceeds to sully his Glory, to abase his Excellency, and bring down his high Locks. But as if this were not enough to aggravate his Abasement, a yet keener Edge is set to his gauling Frets: For God directs these Successes at a time when a *Female* sits upon our Throne, under her Conduct our Forces Triumph; in the words whereby *Debora* did Judg. 5. 13 accent the Praise of God, and the Reproach of *Jabin*, our Queen may say, *The Lord made me have Dominion over the Mighty*. *ME*, a Woman over this *MIGHTY* French King. By this extraordinary Circumstance God adds to his Humiliation, which must more affect his Mind than if such Insults had befallen him;

when our Affairs were manag'd by our late *King*, who had stopp'd this Torrent so long, baffled his Designs so often, who was so sure to improve and persue all Advantages against him, and who by his approved Sagacity, Experience, and Zeal for the *Essentials* of the Protestant Religion and Liberties of Europe, was so far above the Insinuations of the French *Tooles*, that none such could have Confidence to suggest them, unless they were forward to be exposed.

To add no more, we ought to acknowledge the Hand of God, in that by this Success he provides for the *Honour* of his *own Worship*, when the Age profanely ridicules Fasting and Prayer, as things of meer Form, and useless. Therefore God gives this Success in return of solemn *National Prayers*. He who decreeth as well the Means, as the End, excited our *gracious Queen* to begin the Campaign with a *publick Fast*, and it just *endeth* with a most significant part of our Success, when all our designed Attempts were over with the Season of Action. This seems to be cast in with a special Purpose, to encourage Devotion, that whilest his workings shew his *Approbation* of the Homage paid him, all may confess *he said not to the Seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain.*

The *first Part* of the Doctrine being finished, with some enlargement on the *last Head*, as what most directly induceth that regard to God, which is to be express'd in the following Duties, I proceed to the second Part.

2. The Duties towards God, which are required in Return for these Successes.

He who confer'd these Benefits is our Proprietor and Ruler; he governs us as well as saves us, and therefore wisely provides, that all his Mercies be subservient to our Obedience. When he, as a Benefactor owneth us, it is that we may acknowledge him, and that in some proportion to his Appearance for us, and to the Blessings he conveys thereby.

The Holy God worketh *marvelous* things, not to indulge *Mens Lusts*, or fondle *regardless* Sinners: Such a Design by the

of his Works must highly reflect on his Purity, and his regard for his own Honour and Government. His blessed nature must be unknown to them, who are insensible, that he inclines them to *dutifulness* by every Deliverance, he supports the Obligation of his *Laws* by all Successes, claims a Tribute of Praise at the expence of Wonders; and expects loyal Observance in agreeable *Duties*, as he displays the Glory of his nature by his marvellous Works.

The Doctrine mentions those Duties, wherewith *Jehoshaphat* and his People entertain'd their Victory; nor can we be just to God if we in the like Case, imitate not their *Example*, at least in what is naturally Moral, and positively instituted under the Gospel Oeconomie. That praising and blessing the ever blessed God, and rendring to him our Thanksgivings, accompanied with Joy, are of this kind, cannot be disputed by such as scruple the *Psaltory, Harp, and Trumpet*: nor yet can they who have liberty to use the latter, so much as doubt the other Duties to be the most *essential*, and so highly regarded by God, that he will no further accept of any *externals*, than as expressive of them; yea that he, as an infinitely wise and holy spirit, must despise all *musical* Performances; If the Soul be not duly exercised in Praising and Blessing him, and that with Heart impressed by Thankfulness, and enlarged with Joy. I shall therefore call you to apply your selves with all seriousness to each of these Duties.

I. Praise God for all that's *great* in the Success of our arms.

I would not detract from the Valour, Conduct or Fidelity of any Instruments; they were appointed for this purpose, and God hath put great Honour on their names, by making use of them in this glorious Success. But God must not be overlook'd, no nor *rival'd* by them, they and we, from a conviction of his greater Influence, must say, *Not unto us, Psal. 115. 1* Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give Glory. They are Instruments, whom God doth *qualify*, and therefore may be content to affirm it in the words of a Man, as well instructed

Pfal. 114. 1 instructed in Military Affairs; *Blessed is the Lord my Strength which teacheth my Hands to War, and my Fingers to Fight.* It argues a profane Mind, to ascribe little to him, who gave every degree of the *Success*: For it was his Eye directed to whatever tended to it, and his Will determin'd the Issue of each encounter.

The Almighty ought to be praised even for such Victories wherein second Causes act and succeed most *consonantly* to their aptitude; for 'tis he dispenseth Virtue, Skill and Courage to every Agent; yea he could have suspended these, and by assisting t'other side, made it invincible.

But where God hath manifested himself for our Success, by means *incompetent*, by ways *improbable* and surprizing, and given Victory beyond rational Hopes; we are then in an especial manner to observe his Hand, and ascribe the entire Glory to him.

Therefore now review our Successes in every Instance, in every aggrandizing Circumstance, and thereupon lift your very Hearts to God as the *Author*; say, Lord, These are thy Works, this and that hast thou done; it was too great for a weaker Hand, it was too remarkable for a less glorious Agent; but they are in all Respects what become *thine Excellency* to perform.

Take heed of *Formality* in your Acknowledgements, but from a convinced Judgment, a well perswaded Mind, and with warm Affections declare before him: *Neither did their own Arm save them, but thy right Hand, and thine Arm.*

Pfal. 44. 3
Pfal. 69. 10
2 Sam. 6. 2 He ought to be *highly* praised upon all his Works, which appear *great*, and among these Conquest in War is often mentioned, and with respect hereto, *He will be called the Lord of Hosts, and the God of Battel.* Nor is it strange, that he is in holy Writ so frequently address'd under *this Title*, because his own Honour, and his Peoples Happiness are secured by his being the sole *Arbiter* of Wars, and the last decision of National Contests, and grandest Affairs being by Hosts and Battels. His Praise, as *Lord of Hosts* is the same as *Lord* of all human Affairs.

affairs against the greatest Force which can be muster'd, yea rais'd by all those Forces, tho' rais'd for *contrary* Purposes: and not disappointed by the *weakest* Bands, which are intended to execute his Designs. Upon this very Account, as he wisely forbids our *Trust in the Arm of Flesh*, when War is undertaken, so he justly demands the Praise, whenever we do succeed.

Let us then with one Heart proclaim, thou our God art *Lord of Hosts*, and as such hast several ways this Year abated the Pride of France; thou hast assisted Us and our Allies, wherein ever they we have prosper'd against that Enemy. Hadst not thou been *on our Side*, we had been overwhelmed, as well as been disappointed of that Success, wherein we now rejoice. Thus becomes us to commend and publish his great Name, for all his Mighty Works.

2. *Bless* God for all the displays of his *Glory*, in those Successes, you praise him for. *Lift up your Hands in the Sanctuary*, Psal. 134. 2. and *bless the Lord*. Blessing as Mans Act towards God as the *Object*, is far from being the same with his Blessing of Men; for we thereby can in no wise better him, nor add to his Glory or happiness, though in that sense indeed we are blest'd by him.

Praising God and Blessing him, are often convertible Terms, and when either of them alone is mention'd, the other is connoted. But when both are mention'd together as *distinct* duties, blessing God implies somewhat besides meer offering Praises to him, or celebrating his Fame, as the *recognized* Witness of those great Works which we Commemorate. That that is, will be Collected out of the following Passages, wherein I shall call upon you to bless his venerable Name.

The Glory of the Lord hath been *displayed*; the excellency of his Nature, and the transcendency of many of his Attributes have brightly *shined*, in bringing about those great things, for which we have praised him.

Let us now join our *Blessings* with his Praises, *adore* him for those Perfections which are so eminently represented; let your Minds be irradiated, your whole Souls be filled, your Wills be impress'd,

press'd, yea your very Fancy and Imagination be in an extasy at the effulgent Beams of his Glory. Let his *brightness* for
 Neh. 9. 5. you to cry out, *Thou art about all Blessing and Praise.*

Stand amazed at his *own blessedness* in and from himself; he, that all the Mighty do thus *depend* upon for Assistance; at whose beck the greatest Affairs are determined, he at whose entire Disposal are all Successes, with an indifferent regard to the Strength or Weakness of Instruments; surely he can stand in need of no Creature, nor be controul'd by any. What may his *fullness* be, when all spend on his Stock, from Age to Age? How unapproachable is that *Light*, wherein he Dwells, seeing a few Beams do overwhelm us, when most qualified to entertain them, as darting forth by his benign Workings? What Fountain of Blessedness is he in himself, and unto himself, when the overflowing *Drops* thus enrich and advance Nations in a Moment?

Into a transport conclude; all are Blessed, as they are favoured by, and related to him. Happy art thou, O Israel, who is blessed to thee, a People saved by the Lord. Yea, happy is that People whose God is the Lord. The multitude, Riches, military Skill, nor Power of the Enemy can not make us miserable, if thou art our God; nor doth our Welfare depend on such things among our selves, but on thy Favour the only Blessed God, and the *Author of all Blessings*!

In order to a higher extacy in your Conceptions of God as happy in himself, and of the Happiness of his People to him; get your Souls enlivened, enlarged, and fixed in the *Contemplations* of such Divine Perfections, as break forth manifestly and discernably by our Success, and review each of these with Wonder, until your *press'd* Souls do vent themselves in such words as these. O how deep is *thy Wisdom*, which defeated the Policy of our crafty Adversaries, though so famed for Wisdom, Secrecy, Experience, and Unanimity! His *enlargement* of Territory is become his Weakness; by his Confidence in his tributary Dependants is he betrayed! By his vast Expence in heaping Treasures he hath enrich'd his Enemies! By violating Treaties

is become a Looser; by his needless early Insolence he is insulted; by publishing his Preparations his Foes became capable to overcome him; thou, O Lord, art wise, only wise, by whom the Council of the Froward is carried headlong, and the Job 5. 13. led are led Blindfold to great Successes!

How irresistible is thy Power! who hast check'd such great Armies by lesser numbers, reduced so many Towns in so short time, and put a stop to an Enemy, who had such disciplin'd Hosts, and so many faithful experienced Officers, united in their Dependance on one Head!

Who can Fathom thy Mercy! Who hast succeeded Forces so far from Religious, and given Advantages against a cruel Enemy, to a People so profane, so divided, so full of Malignity against real Godliness, so unwilling to be Reformed by several tried Methods, and so disposed to abuse this very Success! which may incline us to express our admiring Thoughts as they did: He overthrew Pharaoh in the Red Sea, for his Mercy Psal. 136. endureth for ever. He remembered us in our low Estate, for his 15. 23. Mercy endureth for ever.

Thence did he derive his Arguments, and how vast is that Stock which is thus expended from Year to Year on an unworthy People. When such Thoughts are entertained, must not your enlarged Hearts break forth a fresh in such Exclamations! Thou art inconceivably happy in these and others of thy blissful Perfections! Oh Blessed Israel, above the greatest Potentates! because this God is thy Rock, Defence, Strength, and great Reward. Oh Happy, the most Blessed, if they have a Covenant Interest in this Favour! Most blessed they, who are nearest to Thee, who beset thy Throne, who are wing'd for thy Service, behold thy Face, and ever sing thy Praise! They need no other Weal, they are capable of no higher.

But Oh unhappy those, who sway the brightest Scepters, possess the largest Territories, command the greatest Armies, and consult by the most absolute Power, if they have no Share in thy Favour: for they are not safe, they cannot long be Glorious: If their time be come, how soon will thy Omnipotency

tenacy overwhelm them into so abject a State, as shall convince
 Dan. 4. 37. the astonished World, *That those who walk in Pride, thou art able to debase.*

2 Chron. 14. 11. *Finally, We cannot be said to bless God, unless we so Contemplate his Glory display'd in what we Bless him for, as to be transform'd and rais'd into Desires and Resolves, which are Correspondent thereto. While we amazedly view his Excellency, we must be so Impress'd and Affected, as to find such Breathings as these; Oh that I could serve thee with Resolution becoming that Protection, thy Power assures me of! and that Reward, which Thy Benignity will not deny! O my Soul canst thou Fear the greatest Strength, when this God is on my Side! Trust him, trust him with firmest Affiance, yea in extremest Cases it cannot be in vain. O Lord, 'tis nothing with thee to Help, whether with many, or with them, who have no Power: Help us, O Lord our God; for we Rest on thee, and in thy Name we go against this Multitude: O Lord, thou art our God, let not Man prevail against thee.*

Blush O my Soul! that I ever doubted a Providence, when I now see the Footsteps thereof so evidently, that to deny it would be to Affront the plainest Sense. Be ashamed, O Soul that I Love him so faintly (when I Love him most) after such Indications of his Goodness! Awaken, O my Soul! to live to him, to act entirely for him, cleave for ever to him who is thus Wise to Guide, thus Able to Defend, thus Gracious to Afford his Presence, and thus Faithful to Perform nay to out do his Promise.

Psal. 72. 18, 19. *All that is with me Bless him; yea let all of us unanimously Eccho these words, Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel who only doth wondrous Things. And Blessed be his glorious Name for ever, and let the whole Earth be filled with his Glory Amen, and Amen.*

In this manner, Bless you the Lord for all his Excellency Works, and the great Displays of his Glory therein: No need we fear any Snare by the affectionate Warmth, or that Extacy, which supposeth the concurring Motion of the Anima

Spirits

Spirits: For though I require these in Blessing our God, yet it is after the *Nature* and *Reason* of our Duty have been examined and judged, by *sedate* and *cooler* Thoughts. But tho' this *last* Posture must be preserved, when we are to pass a *Judgment* on what we are to believe or do; yet for what End are our Animal Spirits given to *intermediate* between this Earthy *all* Body, and our Heaven-born Soul, except it be to Wing the Soul in its ascending Flights, and make the Body as its Associate, Sharer in its *Motion*, as far as possible. I now proceed to the third Duty.

3. Offer *Thanksgivings* to God for that *Good* you reap by the Successes, you Praise and Bless him for.

Join we in granting that zealous Request: *Oh that Men would Praise the Lord for his Goodness, and for his Wonderful Works to the Children of Men. And let them Sacrifice the Sacrifices of Thanksgivings, and declare his Works with Rejoycing.* Heartily acknowledge the *Benefits* received, and that you are deeply indebted to God for each of them. Let the Sense of your Obligations command your *Lives* entirely, in serious Purposes now, in real Performance at all times hereafter; yea desire and conceive Occasions, which may yield the *fullest* Opportunity to express your unfeigned Gratitude; and when you have made the highest Returns, be yet still inquiring, *what I shall render to the Lord for all his Benefits towards me?* Psal. 107. 21, 22.

In order to the better discharge of this Part of your Duty; acquaint your selves with the Benefits conferr'd, study and receive the utmost Good included therein; thank the Almighty God, that you have obtained *Success*, whereas total *Defeats* might have been our Lot; thank him, that its Success against an Enemy, who hath been long the Plague of *Europe*, by his oppressing Attempts, cruel Blood-shed, and enslaving Example. An Enemy for many Years mischievous to *England*, his Counsils and Bribes oft procured *Divisions* among our selves, to the Hazard of our utter Ruin. By his influence we engag'd in Wars against *Holland*, to the Danger of the whole *Protestant* Interest, as well as the Ballance of *Europe*: He brought those

A Thanksgiving Sermon.

Distresses on *Ireland*, attended with the Expence of so much Blood and Treasure: To his Encouragements we owe those Plots and treacherous Methods, which so frequently threatened the last Reign: To him we must ascribe the Obstruction to Trade, the great Consumption of Money, and Men, in these tedious Wars.

How greatly do we stand obliged to God! who hath granted us this Success against an Enemy, who is so unwearied to bring upon us *Popery* and *Slavery*, had he now prevail'd, his Cruelty towards his own Protestant Subjects (tho' slavishly Obsequious and Fond of his Glory) assures us, what Violence, Insolence, and Spoil must have ensued.

Render dutiful Thanks to our God, who by this Success hath so far disabled our Adversary from devouring his Neighbours from extinguishing the Protestant Religion, from trampling the Liberties of *Europe*, and reducing *England* to that narrow abject State, which the meer Performance of the *Articles* agreed to by the late King *James* would fix us in.

Can formal heartless Thanks become us towards him? whose Interposal we have as yet our Religion, our Liberties, Estates and Relations continued secure. What can oblige us if we are not Thankful, that the Honour of the Nation is preserved, the Name of our *Queen* made great, the way for our confin'd Trade somewhat open'd, and so much Addition to our Fleet and Treasure, by what had been employ'd to our Overthrow.

Oh press on your Minds a deep Sense of the Divine Goodness! feel the engaging Power of the Benefits God hath bestowed; but see that your Hearts be thankful, as well as your Lips; and instance your sincerity by greater Zeal for his Glory, Love to his Name, Delight in his Service, and all holy Obedience to him in your Conversation: Vow and pay suitable Returns, both in Kind and in Degree. Surely he hath intitled himself to a higher Place in our affectionate Regards, unless we bear the brand of the highest Disingenuity, and basest Ingratitude. Can we neglect to Live his Praises, unless we despise

the available Blessings, the want whereof had overwhelmed
or that we think, we shall no more stand in any need of his
valuable Assistance.

But before I conclude this Head, I must put you in mind to
consider, that you have another signal Mercy added to that
the Success of our Arms, and which ought to have a Place
in our Thanksgivings, *viz.* The Recovery of his *Highness* the
Prince of Denmark, from a Dangerous fit of Sicknes. When
he was in Danger, he had a share in our Prayers, because his
death on several Accounts had been a publick Judgment: His
prolonged Life is a greater Blessing, then most apprehend;
therefore stir up your selves to be truly Thankful, yea Praise
and Bless the Lord for his Recovery: because he supported
nature when decay'd, and his Blessing gave a healing Efficacy
Means.

4. Add Joy to your Praises and Thanksgivings. This is so
natural, when Providence contributes to our *sensible* Advan-
ce, that there is not so much need to excite our Rejoycing,
to regulate and direct it, both as to its Degrees, and the Con-
siderations, which do most affect us: this as well as other Pas-
sions being apt to degenerate to what is meerly *Carnal*, or to
exceed its bounds.

My Text mentions a twofold Rejoycing. 1. A rejoycing o-
ver their ruined Enemies. 2. A Joy, that God had made them to
rejoyce over their Enemies, Consonantly to this Example.

1. Rejoyce over your baffled Enemies. This is lawful, as they
are the Enemies of God, and as far as their Evil Designs, and
just Enterprizes are defeated by the Hand of God, in fa-
vour of our *Righteous* Cause, yea and of us, who are concer-
ned in that Cause. Humane Bowels are tender to the Afflicted;
Christian Charity inclines to yet more Compassion, as well
as its Laws oblige to Forgiveness: But the true observance of
these consists well with our Joy, at the Reduction of our
Adversaries, as their Welfare obstructed a *Publick Good*, and
their Overthrow contributes to it: yea as the Justice of God
indicates his own and his Peoples Interest; and his Judg-
ments

Zacch. 10.
5. 7.

ments testify the faithfulness of his Promises to them, its the
Duty to rejoice. *They shall be as Mighty Men, which tread down
their Enemies in the Mire of the Streets, in the Battel; and they
shall Fight, because the Lord is with them, &c. And their Hearts
shall rejoice, as through Wine, their Children shall see it, and be
glad, their Heart shall rejoice in the Lord.* Nor will this be
strange to the most improved Saints, in the best State of the
Christian Church, if the Triumphant be not intended in the
place. *Rejoice over her thou Heaven, ye Holy Apostles and Pro-
phets, for God hath Avenged you on her.*

Rev. 19. 20

Therefore, without any Scruple, I call you to rejoice over
the baffled Forces, and reduced Garisons of your Enemies: be
glad that their Ships are seized, their Flota, with much of their
Cargo sunk or taken. Rejoice for the blasted Hopes of the
French King, that Check to his Ambition, and Cloud upon his
Glory. Rejoice, that God vindicates his *Persecuted Subjects*
and testifies his Displeasure at his Violence.

Indulge a Holy Joy, because of his Sufferings, as they are
means to that Good, for which we this Day offer Thanks to our
God; yea as they are *Means or Presages* of further Good
hereafter. Rejoice, that hereby he is somewhat less able to
Corrupt Men in Places of Trust, by his *Bribes*; less fitted to
impede or scant the Trade of his Neighbours by his Force.
Let us be glad, that we have any more hopeful Prospect of
Ease to his own Protestant People, barbarously Persecuted for
so many Years; yea may not we hope a Re-settlement of the
Protestant Religion in his Kingdom, which would fill our
Souls with Gladness.

Rejoice, that his *Universal Monarchy* is less probable, and
stop may be put to that Ocean of Blood he is so earnest to shed
for the gratifying of his insatiable Ambition.

How can we but Rejoice, and be exceeding Glad? that he
is less capable to Depose our Glorious *Queen Anne*, or inter-
rupt the Succession of the Protestant House of *Hanover*, or
failure of Issue by the *Queen*: both which were unavoi-
dable, if his *Power* were sufficient to Force upon us the pro-
tende

ded Prince of Wales, as his Vice-Roy: the remote Supposi-
on whereof fills any Mind with Horrour, who hath a true
al for the Protestant Religion, which is undoubtedly to be
rified; or for the Welfare of his Countrey, already Pawn'd
Articled away; or for the Innocency of the Nation, which
st be laden with Perjury, whilst they, who fear an Oath,
are faithful to their God and National Rights, will be sub-
ed to the Insolencies of incensed Papists, and of those more
fidious Wretches, who ridicule the Obligation of Govern-
ment Oaths, even when they qualify themselves for Power, by
scribing the Abjuration: but to wave further Thoughts of a
object, that must damp our Joys, otherwise then as this Suc-
s contributes to the Prevention of our feared Mischiefs.

Once more, I say, rejoice over your weakned Enemies, in
much, as he is less furnished to Incourage the Dependance of
th upon him, who shall be tempted at any time to be false
their Religion, or Betrayers of their Countrey, in Prospect
his Supports.

a. Let your *chiefest* Joy be in this, That it is the Lord who
de you to rejoice over your Enemy. Judah returned with
y, because God had made them to rejoice over their Enemy. They
affected, that God was the Author of this Victory, and not
ly, that the Victory was obtained: that God was so concer-
d in them, and appeared so wonderfully and immediately in
eir Behalf, that it was by his Hand enhanced their Gladness.

Ought not the same Disposition prevail in us, who as much
pend upon him, as they could any ways pretend to? There-
e unite your Hearts in this Resentment: Let us Rejoice in
ods interposal, as the very Heart and Substance of the Be-
fits we have received, and the best Support of our Hopes, as
what Good we may hereafter need or expect: We ought the
ther terminate our Exultings here, because the more God
eared in our Success, the more it will be Sanctified to us in
Event, and the greater likelihood, there is of its being per-
ed.

As it was an Encouragement, when we engaged, that we were
to

to encounter a notorious Enemy to the Interest of God ; for
 Est. 6. 13. a very noted *ancient Observation* hold, When he is begun
 Isa. 30. 31. decline, he'll fall suddenly, fully, and remarkably ; For the
 32. *the Voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, who
 beat with the Rod, &c.* The common Doom of Persecutors
 when they fall into the Hands of God, after their inveterate
 Rage is directed by him to vent it self, in Correcting his Peo-
 ple, in the Manner and Measure he thinks fittest. But however
 Sovereign Wisdom shall adjust that matter, its besitting us
 Rejoice in all the eminent Discoveries of the Hand of God,
 Jer. 51. 5. fighting our Battels ; for this is a Sign, that our Israel hath
 been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of Hosts ;
 the Land was filled with Sin against the Holy One of Israel.
 God's Presence among us we have greater Cause of Joy, than
 in our victorious Souldiers, enriching Spoils, or augmenting
 Fleet ; the Divine Presence is the Glory and Safety of a Na-
 tion, this will supply all Wants, answer every Defect, succeed
 the weakest Instruments, and strike a Terror into our Adver-
 saries, as we find in the Verse following my Text. *And the Fear
 of God was on all the Kingdoms of those Countries, when they
 heard that the Lord fought against the Enemies of Israel. So the
 Realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet.* The remaining Power of the
 French is great still, his Advantages many, and no doubt we
 shall hear of vast Preparations by Sea and Land ; but we may
 be free from Terror, if God depart not from us ; for his Pre-
 sence will defend us against Multitudes, and render vain the most
 formidable Strength. *Be strong and Courageous, be not afraid
 or dismayed, for the King of Assyria, nor for all the Multitudes
 that is with him, for there be more with us, then with him ; for
 him is the Arm of Flesh, but with us is the Lord our God, to fight
 us, and to Fight our Battels.*

2 Chron.

32. 78.

It's indeed a Wonder of Grace, that God, when so highly
 provoked, should be on our Side, we could scarce expect
 after our Abuse of so many Miraculous Deliverances, and when
 our Abominations had given him Cause, not only to depart
 from us, but become our Enemy. But to our Amazement

and by the manner of our Success, that he is still with our
 forces, he hath not given us a *Bill of Divorce*, but tryes to o-
 rge us to Reformation, by fresh Wonders in the *Beginning*
 of the present Reign. By these he acknowledges us to be yet
 his People, and the Objects of his special Care; by these, he
 invites our further Trust in him, yea if we forfeit not the Re-
 mission, wherein he stands to us, we may conclude, *God, even*
our own God shall bless us. We may Glory in his Perfections,
 and joyfully Triumph in his Excellency; for whilst he is with
 us, all his Perfections have their respective Influence on our
 Welfare; his Wisdom will direct our Counsels, and his Pow-
 er will succeed our Armies. If he delight to dwell among us
 we shall be *Honourable among the Nations*, we shall be a Bles-
 sing to the *Reformed Churches*, and a flourishing People at
 home. O let this be the highest Accent of our Joy, *God hath*
not Cast us off, he accepted our Prayers, he hath Pleaded our
 Cause, we are remarked by his Special Favour, therein we will,
 we must Rejoice; yea we will Joy and Glory in the God of
 our Salvation; and that as our *own God*, and our only Saviour.
 I have finished both the Parts of the Doctrine, it remain-
 eth I should make some *Application*, but so much of this kind
 is included in the Duties already mentioned, that I shall add
 only a few Heads, that are obviously inferr'd from God's being
 the Author of this Success.

Psal. 67. 6.

Isa. 43. 4.

1. Take heed, that you *abuse* not the Success, which you re-
 ceive in, as the Gift of God.
 Can you be glad in this Consideration, the most Holy God
 hath expressed his Regard for us, and it is his Favour we Glory
 in; and must not a Terror form the next Thoughts into a
 resolve against the abuse of his Benefits? Dare we so provoke
 his Glory, or abuse his Goodness? He is Jealous of the Frame
 and Behaviour of his People, after he hath done so great
 things for them; their Sins be aggravated when they Relapse,
 at Gods expence they serve the Devil, and to make their
 mercies an occasion of any impious Course, is to represent God
 as a favourer of Rebellion against himself, by putting them in-

to a greater Capacity for offending, which all must Account great Blasphemy against the Wisdom and Purity of the Divine Nature.

We have great Cause to suspect our selves, when we know the Prowess of degenerate Nature, to abuse the Benefits which we receive, yea and find so good a Man as Jehoshaphat to do so even after this great Victory, and the solemn Praises recorded in my Text.

There be three things left as recorded blotts upon him, viz. His indulging the high Places in compliance with the Indisposedness of the People to a perfect Reformation. Ver. 33. *The Places were not taken away, for as yet the People had not prepared their Hearts unto the God of their Fathers.* We read, that he had renounced and expelled Idolatry, and greatly encouraged the Priests and Levites, &c. yea he remov'd such Groves and High Places out of Judah, wherein Idols were still worshipped: But the People being fond of the High Places, so adhered to old Customs, as to be in danger to leave off the Worship of God, unless they might Worship him in those High Places. Jehoshaphat, tho' he was too Upright a Prince to encourage this Practice, yet he connived at these Places which were Appendages of Idolatry, and which facilitated the Return of it; however indifferent or inconvenient they were esteemed by the People.

Another thing you find, Ver. 35. *And after this did Jehoshaphat join himself with Ahaziah King of Israel,* He had too great a Friendship for one, who was an Enemy to the true Worship, and who wickedly advanced Idolatry (yea on his Death-Bed attempted the Life of the Prophet *Elijah*) the Power of Alliance, Ambition, or Interest, was great, which could induce him, who had so oft promoted Reformation, to come so near a Relapse into the very same Sin, as God had before sharply reprov'd. Saying, *shouldst thou help the Ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is Wrath upon thee from the Lord.* Nay its aggravated by the late eminent Deliverance, which is remarked by those words, *after this*: But whatever was

2 Chron.
19. 2.

Temptation

Temptation to this Amity, he meets with a severe Rebuke, and considerable a Loss, as should Caution against imbarcking our Interest in the same *bottom* with any, who are Ungodly, and hate the Lord. Ver. 37. *Then Eliezer prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying; Because thou hast joined thy self with Ahazia, the Lord hath broken thy Work, and the Ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.*

The other Blot recorded, is in the Chapter following my text, viz. making his idolatrous Son King, from a Zeal for the RIGHT LINE. *But the Kingdom gave he to Jehoram, because he was the First Born.* A Gift, which proved the Ruin of his own Family, and of Judah too; of his Family; for Jehoram slew all his Brethren with the Sword, tho' all of them were Men better than himself: Of Judah, for Idolatry was restored, the Refugees of Israel, who fled to Judah for Religions sake, were Slain, as being most likely to animate the people to the Defence of God's Worship; and the whole Nation was plagued in the Loss of part of their Territories, in the assaults of their idolatrous Enemies, and which was most un-
2 Chron. 21. 4.
Ver. 10. 16, 17.
Ver. 11.
going, in being compelled by this their King, to fall in with his Abominations. Foolish People, if they at first expected better from an Idolatrous Prince! And Jehoshaphat was highly blameable, if he had Reason to suspect his Sons Religion; and strange he should not do so, when he was matched with, and under the Conduct of the House of Ahab. What this wretched Jehoram suffered in his Person, in his Children, and in his Grandchildren, was not only a just Vengeance against him, but a Testimony also against Jehoshaphat, who seems by his meer Donation, if not Power, to have made him King against the Judgment of those, who desired the Succession of some better Branch of that Royal Stem.

Can our Prayers be too Fervent, that our Victories may not puff us up with Pride? As if we had wrought these Wonders without God's Help, or merited his Concurrence by our well-measuring Carriage: Nor is a common Jealousy sufficient, least we grow secure and settled on our Lees, as if we might Sin

A Thanksgiving Sermon.

with Impunity; seeing God hath once smiled upon our Attempts, and reduced the Strength of the most probable Instrument to afflict us.

Should it not be also deprecated with the greatest Seriousness, that any become encouraged to *Persecute* or Irritate each other? Which would be at once the grossest Abuse of our Mercy, and Understanding too: Of our *Mercy*, as if God did Bless our *united* Endeavours, in weakening a Persecutor *Abroad*, that we might be *able*, and at leisure to divide and *persecute* at *Home*: Sure, Divine *Benignity* is Affronted to the Height, when its Effects are made the Engines of Malignity and Rancour, or any way a Motive thereto. But our *Understanding* is no better treated, if we are incited to Violences by these Successes. For the Enemy and his Abettors are not so weak, but that they may reduce us to such Distress, as our *Nation* may be in Danger by the Incapacity and Resentment of the aggrieved, and suppose (as we ought to pray) that no such Exigence occur, yet Persecution must be now the greatest Folly, because the *End* is not designed, for which it was formerly used as *proper means*, i. e. Popery and Slavery: Yea, as it is vain, it must be no less *fatal to Piety*, as the Preachers will be *diverted* from what promotes it: To *Peace*, as our Minds will be irritated: To *Trade*, as People will be discouraged, spoiled, and Men of Substance forced *Abroad*, in order to Safety, Liberty, and Quiet.

Nor can the *Protestant Religion* be secure, when the *Oppressed* part of its Strength is made *useless*; and the *Oppressing* part distinguished by a fiery Zeal, not for any Protestant Principle, but for things so *insignificant*, as must narrow its bottom beyond Stability in a time of Debates, and when Tottering great Despair will encline its Fall to that *Side*, which is next a *Kiss* only in *those* Points, whereto its Power was Sacrificed. What Heart can forbear Bleeding, to think how the *true Protestant Interest* will be exposed by violent Divisions, when they are so very few among the Hottest, who foresee the Turn they serve?

A Thanksgiving Sermon.

29

Yet Blessed be God, the Name of Persecution is become odious, and that the thing shall be prevented, we have the Royal Word of Her Majesty, for which we have Reason to be greatly Thankful, not only for our own Sakes, but for the Nations, which can bear no Addition to its Guilt, nor spare the least Degree of utmost Endeavours, to make it Happy.

But to Conclude, Whatever others do, let not us allow our selves in any Evil Practice, under the Countenance of these Successes; for this will defecrate all our Blessings into Snares, and render our Mercy a Means of severest Judgments. After thou hast given us such a Deliverance as this, should we again break by Commandments, and join in Affinity with People of these Abominations, wouldst not thou be Angry with us, till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no Remnant nor Escaping.

Ezr. 9. 14.

15.

2. Answer the Ends for which God hath wrought thus Marvellously for us.

Not to abuse our Success to ill Purposes, is not sufficient under a Trust so capable to be improved. And to imagine either that God expects not such Improvements, or will not animadvert on our Omission, is to accuse him of a Disregard in what Concerns his Government over this World; the contrary to which, the most careless shall find to their own Ruin, when summoned to give an Account of the least Talent.

Mat. 25.

28.

An ingenuous thankful Mind will suggest many and great things, as Fitly demanded in return for this Deliverance. Happy England, if all Persons strive to answer God's Expectations, in proportion to their Ability; some can do much, all may do somewhat. Such as explain God's Design in this Providence to the great, no doubt will encourage them to pursue this War, till France be so reduced, as the Ballance of Europe may be secure; and if possible, the Protestant Religion restored there, and established in other Places where its threatned. Nor can they fail to press their hearty Endeavours to promote a National Reformation of Manners, by Power and Example; as also what other things for God, their Influences capacitates them to do, either in Church or State; of which kind, the removal

removal of Useless things which *divide* us, is not the least.

But my Concern is to persuade you to those things which are *common* to all of us; and they shall be what the Holy Ghost directs in the like Case, *Believe and revere a Divine Providence.* God hath begun to execute Vengeance on Insolent Persecuting Blasphemers, is not God's End in this? That Man shall say, *verily, there is a God who judgeth in the Earth.* He hath wrought a great Salvation for our Land; but to what End doth God exert himself, in the Behalf of his People? Hezekiah answers, it is, *That all may know, that thou art Lord, even thou only.* If you review the Indication of a Providence in our Success, which I have already mentioned, an Atheist cannot find a Cause of any Effect, if that had not the ordering of our Victory. Learn then to acknowledge God in all your Ways, to acquiesce in his Disposals, and patiently wait to see the Wisdom of those Methods, which at first you may not Understand.

Again, God requires, that if he Fight for you, you should take heed to your selves, that you Love the Lord your God. Benefits engage to Love: Let a Sense therefore of his Goodness unite our Hearts to him, and greatness our Esteem of him; *Jealously Love him, who is God over all; sincerely Love him* whose Kindness for us is so Fruitful and Efficacious: To manifest the Sincerity of your Love, see that his Commandments be not grievous to you, his Yoke not uneasy, nor Fellowship with him slighted; but that his Honour commands your Zeal in his Interest you freely imbarke, at what's Offensive to him; you are Grieved, his Loving-kindness is better than Life to you, and you daily strive to be more Transformed into his Likeness.

A farther Design of God in his Wonderful Works is, That Men may set their Hope in God, and not forget his Works, but keep his Commandments, and not be as their Fathers, a stubborn rebellious Generation. Do not easily question his Help, nor Trust in any other: Let not such great things slip your Mind, nor the due Impressions of them wear off; but live under the

conduct of his Precepts; that you may not put a stop to his Working in like manner, whenever you are in the same Necessity, which your *Fathers* experienced to their Hurt; and therefore you should take Warning not to imitate them in ways Fatal, nor think their *Custom* will be your Excuse, or ought to be your Rule.

Nor is it less the end of this Success, *That you cleave unto the Lord your God, for the Lord your God hath driven out great Nations from before you, great Nations and strong; but as for you, no Man hath been able to stand before you to this day.* Oh therefore apply your Hearts to this, as what God expects: You have experienced his Power against *Popish* Enemies, shall we ever comply with their Errors, or wallow in their Abominations, God forbid: Have we any Cause to forsake our God, to desert his Interest? See we not, that he is as ready, as he is able to Defend us: But who can Skreen us from his Wrath, if we provoke him by our Apostacy? *Its a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God.* For upon your Revolt from him, those Perfections which contributed to our present Safety, will become engag'd in making us utterly Miserable.

These are some of the *Ends* of God, by such Successes as we had them explained by his infallible Spirit. If you refuse to answer them, you do what in you lies to defeat God's Purpose; as well as disappoint your selves of the best part of the Mercy, viz. Your Spiritual and Eternal Advantage by it: You'll find these great Successes will testify against you, and what you now remember with Joy, you must review with Shame and Bitterness: Neither, if you neglect to comply with these Ends of God, which respect Duty on our part, shall you find comfort in those ends, which God on his part will effectually accomplish, whether these be terrible or favourable to his Churches, is a Secret with himself; but be that as he pleaseth, his Success against outward Adversaries, may also direct us to fight against our spiritual Enemies, and that with assuring hope, because the Grace of Christ is sufficient for us; and we are more than Conquerors, through him that loved us; which if we experienced

Josh. 23.

6, 7.

Heb. 10.

31.

2 Cor. 12.

6.

experienced in the worst Temptations and Trials, exceeds all our Victories, and will be matter of eternal Praise.

3. Be afraid least we *forfeit the Presence* of God with our Armies.

The *Departure* of God is what we have reason to Fear, for that will not only put a stop to our Advances, but blast that Success for which we are Offering our Praises: We are ready to say, *Thou hast made a Mountain to stand strong*; but know, that's as true which follows, *Thou didst hide thy Face and I was moved*. When the mere *biding* of his Face will have such an Effect, what more dismal things will ensue *Forfaking* a People? For the greatest Darkness and Desolation suppose his Absence, and nothing shall be more feelingly confess'd by us, than the Force of that Denunciation; *Wo also to them, when I depart from them*.

If by our Offences, our Condition prove thus Miserable, our *valorous* Souldiers will become Cowards, like the Children of Ephraim, *being armed, and carrying Bowes, turned back in the Day of Battel*. Our stoutest Generals will be as *Women*; our wisest Councillors will become *Fools*; our Enemies, though never so *weak*, will serve to baffle *Though ye fight with the Chaldeans ye shall not prosper*.

When God departs from us, as his Ordinances will have no good Effect on the State of our *Souls*, so his Providence will Act in a contrary manner to our temporal Welfare, we shall not only want its Aid, but must undergo those Defeats, Disappointments, and vexatious Consequences, which the Terror of the Almighty will produce.

2 Chron. 25. 8. *England's All is in God's Power, for he can Help or cast Down; as he Favours or Frowneth, as he is near or afar off, our Case will be determined*. Therefore that solemn Caution to *Israel* ought to be regarded by us, *If ye in any wise go back, know for a Certainty, the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these Nations from before you; they shall be Snares and Traps unto you, &c.*

Josh. 23. 12, 13, 16. Whilst God is with us, we shall find Prosperity in our Affairs; but when he *removes*, our Defence, our Guide, our Glory, is departed from us: Then we shall be Contemptible Abroad, and a Terror to our Selves at Home. As therefore you have any regard for yourselves, for the Nation, and for Posterity, *Avoid* those things which provoke God to leave a Nation, and be intent on such Ways as will secure his Presence.

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